

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCCT-01 AID-05 IO-10 A-01 OPR-02

SY-05 OC-05 CCO-00 CU-02 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 /093 W

----- 056124

O 241222Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4031

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL UDORN

CDR USSAG NKP

MACTHAI BANGKOK THAI/J/3

DIA WASHDC

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 3685

JAKARTA FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, PFOR, US, LA

SUBJECT: SITUATION IN LAOS MAY 24, 1975

REF: VIENTIANE 3656

1. TAPS FOR TAPS: LATE IN THE DAY ON MAY 23 THE TRANS-AIR
PROTECTIVE SERVICES MANAGEMENT INFORMED ITS EMPLOYEES THAT
TAPS WAS CLOSING. AT APPROXIMATELY MIDNIGHT PATHET LAO
TROOPS AND STUDENTS WENT AROUND TOWN ROUNDING UP TAPS GUARDS
FROM THEIR POSTS AND APPREHENDING SEVEN OR EIGHT OF THE
COMPANY'S SENIOR LAO PERSONNEL. THE COMPANY'S THREE
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AMERICANS AND ONE TCN SOUGHT THE SAFETY OF THE EMBASSY

CHANCERY. THEY NEGOTIATED OFF AND ON THROUGH MIDWATER-
NOON MAY 24 WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THEIR FORMER EMPLOYEES
ON SEVERANCE PAY AND OTHER ISSUES BUT AS OF 1630 HOURS
HAD NOT REACHED AGREEMENT. THEY WERE SCHEDULED TO SIT
DOWN AGAIN IN EMBASSY SNACK BAR IN PRESENCE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF LAO STUDENT FEDERATION AND PGNU LABOR BUREAU WHEN NEW DEMONSTRATION ERUPTED (SEE BELOW).

2. DEMONSTRATION AT EMBASSY: AT 0800 HOURS A SMALL GROUP
OF DISMISSED TAPS GUARDS GATHERED IN FRONT OF CHANCERY; THEY WERE JOINED AT 0900 BY A GROUP OF SOME 150 USAID EMPLOYEES WHO WERE PROTESTING THE FACT THAT THEY HAVE NOT BEEN PAID DUE TO CONTINUING OCCUPATION OF THE NA HAI DIAO COMPLEX. CROWD WAS NOISY BUT NOT VIOLENT. AN OFFICIAL CAR CARRYING TWO ASSISTANT AIR ATTACHES WAS SURROUNDED AT GATE WHILE TRYING TO ENTER THE EMBASSY COMPOUND. ATTACHES DISCUSSED SITUATION WITH DEMONSTRATORS AND IT WAS FINALLY AGREED THAT THEY, THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR AND A USAID REPRESENTATIVE WOULD GO TO THE NA HAI DIAO COMPOUND TO TALK WITH OCCUPATION LEADERS AND USAID/TAPS EMPLOYEES. THE DELEGATION WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A JOINT POLICE MOTORCYCLE ESCORT. AT COMPOUND USAID GATE THE EMBASSY DELEGATION EXPLAINED U.S. READINESS TO MEET PAYROLL OBLIGATIONS ONCE THE COMPOUND WAS RESTORED TO COMPLETE U.S. MISSION CONTROL. OCCUPIERS REFUSED TO LEAVE THE COMPOUND. CONVERSATIONS PETERED OUT AND THE EMBASSY TEAM DEPARTED WHEN IT BECAME APPARENT THERE WAS NO OCCUPATION LEADER PRESENT WITH SUFFICIENT AUTHORITY TO CLEAR THE COMPOUND OR TO SPEAK INTELLIGENTLY TO THE UNPAID USAID EMPLOYEES. EMBASSY CONTINUES TO INFORM EMPLOYEES OF ITS POSITION AND SYMPATHY WITH THEIR PLIGHT.

3. LPF JCCIA DELEGATE COLONEL PHAO BOUNNAPHOL MATERIALIZED NEAR GATE WHILE EMBASSY DELEGATION WAS ON THE SCENE. HE EXHIBITED USUAL GENIALITY IN SIDE CONVERSATION WITH POLITICAL COUNSELOR BUT SAID HE HAD COME ONLY TO CHECK ON REPORTS OF THREATENING BEHAVIOR THERE BY PATHET LAO MILITARY PERSONNEL (A PROBABLY DISTORTION OF OUR EARLIER COMPLAINT ABOUT PL ROLE IN THE OVERNIGHT ROUND-UP OF CONFIDENTIAL

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TAPS PERSONNEL, DESCRIBED ABOVE). PHAO PROFESSED IGNORANCE OF ORDERS FROM PRIME MINISTER TO HIS JCCIA BOSS BOTH PHETRASY TO REMOVE DEMONSTRATORS FROM USAID COMPOUND AND GENERALLY CONSTRUED HIS ROLE IN MOST LIMITED WAY IMAGINABLE.

4. SITUATION AT NA HAI DIAO COMPOUND UNCHANGED: THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE AT USAID NA HAI DIAO COMPOUND; AP-

PROXIMATELY THIRTY DEMONSTRATORS REMAIN INSIDE COMPOUND ALONG WITH A FEW PATHET LAO AND TWO OR THREE VIENTIANE SIDE SOLDIERS FROM THE MIXED POLICE. PL TROOPS ARE ALSO STATIONED OUTSIDE MAIN GATE. THE THREE AMERICANS TRAPPED IN VARIOUS BUILDINGS INSIDE COMPOUND REMAIN IN GOOD CONDITION AND IN RELATIVELY HIGH SPIRITS. THERE HAS APPARENTLY BEEN NO FURTHER DAMAGE OR LOOTING INSIDE THE COMPOUND. PL CHEF DE CABINET EMPHASIZED THIS POINT TO EHBOFF, BUT SEEMED UNIMPRESSED BY EMBOFF'S OBSERVATION THAT NO ONE SHOULD BE INSIDE EMBASSY PREMISES AND THAT PROTECTION COULD BE BEST PROVIDED FROM OUTSIDE THE FENCE.

5. LETTER SENT TO FONMIN ON USAID DISSOLUTION: IN EFFORT TO BREAK IMPASSE, CHARGE SAW PRIME MINISTER AND FONMIN AND DISPATCHED LETTER TO FONMIN AT 1230 HOURS FORMALLY ADVISING HIM OF USG DECISION TO DISSOLVE USAID AND SEND ALL USAID PERSONNEL HOME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE; IT ALSO EXPRESSED USG WILLINGNESS TO TURN OVER THAT MATERIEL TO WHICH LAO GOVERNMENT IS ENTITLED UNDER TERMS OF 1951 AGREEMENT AND INDIVIDUAL PROJECT AGREEMENTS.

6. WAREHOUSES STILL GUARDED BY JMPFS/STUDENTS: USAID WAREHOUSES AT KM-9 AND "KIM SUA" ARE STILL GUARDED BY MEMBERS OF THE JMPF AND THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN SITUATION IN EITHER LOCATION.

7. ACCESS TO KM-6: DURING PAST 24 HOURS IT HAS BEEN POSSIBLE TO ENTER AND DEPART USAID RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX AT KM-6 IN VEHICLES WITH "CD" AND "IT" PLATES. JMPF GUARDS ARE NOT PERMITTING AIT VEHICLES TO LEAVE KM-6 ON GROUND THAT THEY "BELONG" (SIC) TO THE LAO PEOPLE.

8. DEPARTURES MAY 24 UNDER ACCELERATED REDUCTION
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PROGRAM REPORTED SEPTTEL.

9. AFTERNOON DEMONSTRATION: AT APPROXIMATELY 1645 HOURS LOCAL A CROWD OF SHOUTING, PLACARD-CARRYING TAPS AND USAID EMPLOYEES AGAIN CONVERGED ON CHANCERY DEMANDING THEIR PAY. WITH REINFORCEMENTS FROM STUDENTS AND CHILDREN, THEIR NUMBERS PEAKED AT 200. USIS INFORMATION OFFICER ADRESSED THEM IN LAO, AND CHARGE AND ACTING USAID DIRECTOR ALSO JOINED IN CONVERSATION THROUGH LOCKED GATE, AGAIN EXPLAINING OUR POSITION ON THIS ISSUE. FOREIGN MINISTER'S CHEF DE CABINET CAME TO CHANCERY, MET WITH CHARGE AND ACTING USAID DIRECTOR, AND THEN ADDRESSED CROWD AS HE LEFT PREMISES. ACCORDING TO JOURNALISTS, HE TOLD USAID EMPLOYEES THEY WOULD BE PAID MAY 26 WHETHER NA HAI DIAO COMPOUND WAS STILL OCCUPIED OR NOT; THIS HELPED

TO DISPERSE CROWD BUT MISREPRESENTS ENTIRELY WHAT HE
WAS TOLD INSIDE CHANCERY. TWO HOURS AFTER IT STARTED,
DEMONSTRATION IS BREAKING UP, BUT AT THE MOMENT
THE CHANCERY LOBBY IS POPULATED BY AUSTRALIAN AND
BRITISH EMBOFFS, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR AND VOA
CORRESPONDENTS, AND ASSORTED OTHER INVOLUNTARY GUESTS.
CHAPMAN

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